CHRISTIANITY AND WAR

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"*The Christian ideal of universal peace is not the mere absence of war. It is the full and practical recognition of the Universal Fatherhood of God and the Universal Brotherhood of Man. It is the full and practical application of the spirit of Christ's Sermon on the Mount to all our relationships in life, not excepting our foreign relationships.*"

Christianity and War

At the World's Great Conference of Religions held some years ago at Chicago, a non-Christian speaker is reported to have said that they all loved our Christ, but that they did not want our Christianity, and these words seem to express what must be the feelings of thousands of thoughtful pagans all the world over. They had need love our Christ, and alas! they have almost equal reason to abhor our Christianity. But if we take Christianity to mean, not the creeds and customs of Christendom, but the spirit of our Lord's life and teaching, then, without the shadow of a doubt, we cannot read the four gospels with an unprejudiced mind without coming to the conclusion that Christianity and war are diametrically opposed and absolutely irreconcilable.

THE TEACHING OF CHRIST

Take, for example, the summary of our Lord's teaching given in the Sermon on the Mount. That sermon begins with the beatitudes, and the qualities there singled out for special commendation are such as would absolutely disqualify a man from being a good soldier. Blessed are the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, the persecuted. These are not qualities such as we should ever think of ascribing to a Cæsar, an Alexander, or a Napoleon Bonaparte or even to a Lord Kitchener.

Then our Lord goes on further to elaborate His teaching and to show that it was in no wise opposed to that of the prophets who went before Him, but that on the

contrary, it brought forward the teaching of those prophets to its logical conclusion.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." That is to say, to fill full, to complete. And the whole of the rest of the chapter is devoted to examples of this fulfilment or completion. Let us take two of the examples given.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Such was the ethical standard of that day, nor must we forget, if we are rightly to understand our Lord's argument, that it was a higher ethical standard than that of more primitive times when the law of revenge knew no such definite limitations. Of course in very early times the law of revenge knew no limits whatever, save only the limits of possibilities. A man would revenge himself to the utmost of his power. Then came the law, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." A man must not revenge himself to a greater extent than that to which he had been wronged. This Lex Talionis is contained in the Mosaic Dispensation, but in reality it is far older than that, for we find it in the code of Hammurabi, the oldest code of laws that has been discovered. Then came the fulfilment or completion:—

"But I say unto you that ye resist not evil."

This command of Jesus has given rise to the unfortunate expression, "the doctrine of non-resistance." But the true Christian position is not merely that of non-resistance. It is not a negative position at all. It is the resistance of evil with good—hatred with love. It is much more than "Peace at any price." It is "Love at any price"—even at the price of the Cross.

Our Lord goes on further to exemplify His meaning in order that no one could possibly misunderstand Him unless wilfully. "But whosoever shall smite thee on the one cheek turn to him the other also." That then is what our Lord meant by non-resistance of evil.

Then, again, a little later on in the same sermon: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy." Here, again, we see revealed the ethical standard of that day. Again we must remember, if we are rightly to understand our Lord's argument, that it was a higher ethical standard than that of more primitive times, when every man's hand was against every man. But perhaps it was not such a long step forward as might at first appear. It simply meant that a man was to love those of his own tribe and his own religion. It was our Lord's parable of the Good Samaritan which extended the meaning of the word "neighbour," until it has come to mean anyone to whom we can be of service or to whom we can do a kindly deed. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you," and here comes in the fulfilment or completion, "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

In the early months of the late war there were displayed outside some paper shops large posters saying with large exclamation marks, "A Canon says we must love the Huns!" as though such a statement were preposterous in the extreme. But surely the Canon was only saying what every follower of Christ would say. How could any honest Canon say otherwise? When Christ said "Love your en-

emies," His nation was suffering from the very atrocities that we feared we might suffer from, were we to fall under the sway of German conquerors. If the story of the massacre of the innocents be not historical, it can be trusted to show the kind of thing that occasionally happened, and another interesting side-light is thrown on the subject by our Lord's words regarding those Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices. The nation was seething with discontent, and was eagerly looking for a Messianic deliverer who should lead a successful revolt against the cruel tyranny of Rome. And when Jesus came, instead of doing what the Jews expected of Him, and what their scriptures gave them some right to expect, He told them to love their enemies! To love the Huns! What wonder that they crucified Him! Should we have done less? And then our Lord goes on to give a most striking reason why we should love our enemies: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven, for He maketh His sun to rise upon the evil and upon the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and upon the unjust." And if God, our Heavenly Father, thus bestows His gifts upon good and evil, upon friend and enemy alike, who are we, forsooth, that we should be so much more discriminating? Moreover, He adds, "If ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?" And finally, in conclusion, "Be ye therefore perfect." Why? "Because your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." With such a parentage it surely behooves us to show some signs of family resemblance. "*Noblesse oblige.*" So we see that the whole of Christ's argument rests upon the universal Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man.

Now it has often been argued that such passages of

Scripture were never intended to be taken literally. It is not necessary that they should be taken literally. Take them metaphorically. Take them spiritually. Twist them and turn them as you will. In order to make such teaching harmonize with war, you must call white, black; and light, Egyptian darkness.

It may be freely admitted that if these were isolated texts, and out of harmony with the rest of Christ's teaching, they would prove nothing. You can prove anything you like by the misapplication of isolated texts. But in fact these are not isolated texts. They are perfectly characteristic extracts from the teaching of Jesus. In them there breathes the very spirit of the Master, whose whole life was in perfect harmony with that which He taught. Thus He himself refused the help of physical force when that help was available and, apparently, much to be desired. For example, when Simon Peter drew his sword and smote the servant of the High Priest, striking off his ear, our Lord rebuked him with the words, "Put up thy sword into its place, for they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Yet the action of Peter was bold in the extreme, and if ever the use of the sword was justifiable it was justified then. Was the sword ever drawn in a nobler cause than that of protecting our Lord and Master? Yet the bold protector of his Master and ours received only a rebuke: "Put up thy sword into its place." Its place then was the scabbard, and if its proper place was the scabbard then, it could never again have any other proper place amongst the professing followers of the Prince of Peace.

Then, again, on another occasion, when two of the disciples, one of them the gentlest and most lovable of all,

sought to call down fire from Heaven to consume a Samaritan village which had refused to entertain the Master, the suggestion met with a rebuke remarkable for its severity: "Ye know not what spirit ye are of." Two thousand years have passed away since then, and still the professing followers of the Prince of Peace call for fire and sword to consume their so-called enemies. Alas! that their ears are so dull of hearing, else surely they would hear the stern rebuke of the Master, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of."

AN ERA OF TURMOIL

Do not imagine for one moment that there was nothing in Palestine in the first century corresponding to what we call jingoism today. Historians tell us that belligerent patriotism was far more rampant in Palestine in the first century than it has ever been in the United States. Many a Jewish youth, goaded to desperation by the cruel tyranny of Rome, persuaded himself that he was the promised Messiah who should deliver his country, and leading a little band of zealots against the pitiless power of Rome, suffered crucifixion. Jesus, too, was crucified, but He, because He refused to be the belligerent Messiah that the Jews expected, was crucified by His own nation as a traitor and one might almost say a pro-Roman. He died on the cross for the enemies of His country.

It is often argued that if our Lord had intended to forbid war He would have forbidden it more explicitly. But such was never His method. He did not come into the world in order to introduce a new code of laws which should supplement or supplant the old. He came rather to offer for our

acceptance a spirit of love and universal brotherhood which should render any such code of laws absolutely unnecessary. And thus it was that when George Fox was asked to join the Parliamentary army he did not answer as he might have done, that any such course of action was forbidden by Scripture, though this answer might well have been defended by a far less able advocate than George Fox. But his answer was deeper and more far-reaching than that. He lived, he said, "in the virtue of that life and power which took away the occasion of all war." And truly, to such as live in the virtue of the life and power of Jesus Christ, war is, and must be, impossible.

Nothing could better exemplify the weakness of the position occupied by professing Christians who seek to defend war than the arguments which they bring forward in its support. Such arguments are, for the most part, arguments of expediency, but four passages are constantly referred to from the New Testament. Let us therefore consider them.

FOUR PASSAGES IN THE GOSPELS

1. On one occasion our Lord made a scourge of small cords and drove the traders from the temple. Was not this the use of physical force? Well! was it? There is no reason to suppose that physically our Lord was any stronger than an ordinary man. At the time when this happened, the outer court of the temple had become a vast market-place, and the buyers and sellers had all the force of law and custom on their side. If any ordinary individual were to make a scourge of small cords and were to seek to clear a vast market-place would the consequences be to any degree

comparable? Of course they would not, and surely it follows that the force used was not physical but moral force. Scholars tell us that in the original it is quite clear that the scourge of small cords was intended to drive out the cattle. It was not intended for the buyers and sellers.

2. Our Lord once said, "There shall be wars and rumors of wars, and the end is not yet." Here our Lord makes a simple prediction, a prediction all too amply verified by subsequent history. It would have been equally true had He said there shall be lies and rumors of lies, and the end is not yet; but we should not on that account have condoned lying. Or He might have said, with equal truth, there shall be murders and rumors of murders, and the end is not yet. But we should not on that account have exonerated the murderer.

3. On another occasion our Lord said, "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword."

Here again our Lord makes a simple prediction, this time concerning what the effect of His coming would be. The bringing of the sword was to be the consequence, not the reason, of His coming. No one in his senses would argue that the reason of our Lord's coming was to bring the sword. In the Bible (as in other Eastern writings) cause and effect are never clearly distinguished. The effect is often spoken of as though it were the cause, as, for example, when our Lord's miracles are said to have been performed in order that prophecy might be fulfilled. Moreover, if this text is to be used to justify war, it must equally be used to justify family quarrels. For our Lord goes on to say, "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the

daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

4. Lastly, our Lord once said, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." On this occasion, as on so many others, the disciples understood literally the metaphorical language of Jesus, and one of them eagerly suggests to Him, "Lord, here are two swords," whereon our Lord sadly answered, "It is enough." It is enough! Two swords among twelve men surrounded by bitterly hostile enemies. Could any language have been more obviously ironical! Yet, notwithstanding the obvious irony of our Lord's reply, some of the disciples seem actually to have provided themselves with swords in consequence of what He said, and one of them, Peter, used his sword, bringing upon himself the stern rebuke of the Master, to which reference has been made. Surely it is obvious that if these words of Jesus are to be taken as a literal command they are absolutely out of harmony with the rest of His teaching. There is no instance more flagrant or more deplorable of an isolated text of Scripture being constantly used to prove what is obviously untrue.

"But," some will say, "how about the wars of the Jews? Surely they were directly ordained by God?" Well! We live in the twentieth century when the higher cricitism and the theory of evolution have alike become orthodox. And in such an age this argument should scarcely need refutation. Surely it is obvious that in the Old Testament we have the teaching of Jesus in process of evolution. The apostle Paul clearly recognizes this fact when he says, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." The word here trans-

lated, schoolmaster, is the Greek word, "*paidagogos*," and the *paidagogos* was not really the schoolmaster, but the Greek slave whose duty it was to take the child to school. And if this be true, then, obviously, the thought in the apostle's mind was that Christ Himself was the schoolmaster, and that it was the glorious function of the law to lead the Children of Israel to Him. But however this may be, it is obvious that the apostle Paul clearly recognizes the fact that the teaching of Jesus does not stand alone, but forms the consummation of an evolution of religious thought. Indeed, Christ Himself recognizes this when He says, "I came not to destroy the law and the prophets but to fulfil them"; to fill them full. And this being so, then to go back for our ethical precedents to the Old Testament is much as though a modern chemist were to hark back upon the authority of the alchemists upon a question of organic chemistry. The thing is absurd on the face of it, and by so doing we do not only justify war; we justify the most appalling massacres; we justify slavery; we justify bigamy; we justify polygamy; we even justify polytheism. We justify hundreds of things which even the most earnest advocate for war would scarcely wish to justify. In short, the argument proves too much.

But, even in the Old Testament, the most inspired of the prophets looked forward to a time when war should cease. Not only so, but they looked forward to it as an ideal to be striven after, a consummation devoutly to be wished. Thus the prophets Isaiah and Micah alike speak of a time when "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not rise against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

THE VIEWS OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

It is very interesting to find Irenaeus and Justin Martyr, two early Christians, who wrote towards the close of the second century, speak of these prophecies of our Lord as having been fulfilled in their own day by the fact that Christians of their day refused to carry arms. Well was it for them that they lived in the second century and not in the twentieth!

And this leads on very naturally to consider the question in what light those regarded the teachings of Jesus on the question of war who lived nearest His time? For surely those who lived nearest the time of our Lord were in a specially favorable position for understanding His real meaning on such a point.

Now, in the first place, it may be pointed out that the teaching of the apostles was just as pacific as was that of their Master. Thus James, our Lord's brother, writes: "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of the lusts that war in your members?"

Then, again, the apostle Paul writes: "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

And, again, how full are the writings of the apostle John of this spirit of love and universal brotherhood!

But far more explicit testimony is to be found when we come to study the customs of the early Christians. For there is not the slightest doubt that for the first two centuries of our era Christians consistently refused to carry arms, and when a soldier became converted to Christianity,

as a matter of course he left the army. Many suffered martyrdom for this very cause, such as Maximilian, and Marcellus, and Cassian, and all alleged as an all-sufficient reason for their refusal to bear arms, "I am a Christian and therefore I cannot fight." Scholars tell us that over and over again do these words recur in the records of the early Christians, "I am a Christian and therefore I cannot fight."

It is very interesting to find these early Christians refuting exactly the same arguments in favor of war that we have to refute today. And they did it by reference to the Sermon on the Mount and to the incidents in the life of our Lord. Thus Tertullian, writing towards the close of the second century, says, "When Christ disarmed Peter, he disarmed every soldier."

THE LIMITS OF FORCE

And now let us consider whether the use of physical force is ever lawful to the Christian; and, if so, what are the limits of its lawfulness.

Probably followers of Tolstoy would answer the question by saying that the use of physical force is never lawful to the Christian, and this is a simple solution to the problem. But it is not a solution which all are able to adopt.

Thus we make use of physical force to restrain persons of unsound mind, and they themselves, when they are recovered from their malady, are often the first to thank us for what we have done. It is our solicitude for their welfare which thus causes us to bring physical force to bear. Surely such uses of physical force must be in harmony with the spirit of our Lord's teaching.

In discussing this question as to the legitimate uses of physical force, a great deal has been said concerning the similarity of the soldier and the policeman. But between these two officials there is this obvious distinction: That the work of the policeman in an ideal community would be done for the benefit of the person upon whom physical force is brought to bear; while in the work of the soldier, the benefit of the individual must, of necessity, be lost sight of. Do not imagine for one moment that this is a defense of our present methods of dealing with criminals, or that all those methods are in harmony with the teaching of our Lord. It is, however, possible that they may become so, and the fact that we may with reason look forward to a time when the object of our criminal law shall be no longer merely the protection of society, but rather the reformation of the criminal and his well-being.

Before William Tuke founded York Retreat for the insane, which took place towards the close of the eighteenth century, the treatment of lunatics was conducted on precisely the same lines as is the treatment of criminals today. The protection of society was the only thing thought about, whilst the welfare of the lunatic was absolutely ignored. Punishments were then the order of the day for lunatics, just as they are now for criminals. We look back upon those days as days of barbarism, and we think of those who treated the lunatics of those days as little saner than the lunatics themselves. The only thing we think of nowadays in the treatment of lunatics is their recovery; or if that be impossible, the amelioration of their unhappy lot. The protection of society is scarcely given a thought, and yet society is far better protected under the new *régime* than ever it

was under the old. Now the lunatic and the criminal are first cousins. They are far more closely related than most people realize, and when the object of our criminal law is the reformation of the criminal, society will be far better protected than is at present the case.

And now we are in a position to define exactly within what limits the use of physical force is lawful to the Christian. It is lawful only so far as it is absolutely necessary for the well-being of the individual upon whom physical force is brought to bear. Whenever the well-being of that individual is lost sight of, the use of physical force becomes at once unlawful and unchristian.

It is often asserted that in the late war the Allies were acting as the policemen of Europe to maintain law and order. But one thing upon which our Lord laid great emphasis was the infinite value of each individual. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." Every individual, being a child of our Heavenly Father, must be equally the recipient of His love and of infinite value in His sight. But even apart from such high idealism how senseless is this slaughter!

The men we were mowing down like grass were not the German War Lord. They were for the most part simple kindly folk like ourselves and, equally with ourselves, children of an All Loving Father in Heaven.

THE WAY OF CHRIST

One must remember that Christianity was not a new end in view: It was a new way of attaining that end. All

will agree that the end Christ had in view was a Kingdom of Heaven. But the Pharisees also wanted a Kingdom of Heaven. They were constantly talking and praying about it and their literature is full of it. But they chose the way of the sword which Jesus described as the broad way leading to destruction. Forty years later His words were verified.

A little study of the Acts of the Apostles will prove that the members of the Apostolic Church did not call their religion Christianity. That was a name coined at Antioch. The title they chose for their religion was "The Way." It was a new way of life—a new way of conquering enemies—a new way of overcoming difficulties—a new way of inaugurating the Kingdom—The Way of Love.

The good, kindly folk constantly tell us that "We are all working for the same end," as though that were all that mattered! Every man of good-will wants a Kingdom of Heaven. But the thing that matters is not the end we have in view, but "The Way." If we are on the wrong road we shall never reach our destination.

Let us consider then what science and history have to say concerning The Way of Jesus.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Many will remember the wave of materialism which swept over England in the last half of the nineteenth century. Darwin had just published his "Origin of Species." Tyndall, Huxley and Herbert Spencer were then at the height of their intellectual powers and they had so rounded off the materialistic theory of the Universe that their position seemed impregnable. The materialistic position, how-

ever, which they held is now a thing of the past. We now know that the law of the survival of the fittest does not mean "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindermost." If it had meant that, then the world would have been peopled by the huge monsters whose ugly remains are still to be found in our museums. But brute force was not the last word of evolution. The higher we ascend the animal scale, the more do intellectual, moral and spiritual faculties enter in as survival factors, until the importance of brute force dwindles into insignificance. It is indeed strange that after the materialistic position has been given up by almost all the scientists of repute, in the practical affairs of international politics gross materialism should still hold undisputed sway, and that moreover with the full approbation of the Churches.

Certain animals have been unfitted alone to obtain sustenance or to defend themselves and they have in consequence evolved the "gregarious" instinct. These gregarious animals live in communities, in flocks and herds. They cooperate for material help and mutual protection and are ready to sacrifice their own selfish interests for the interests of the community. Bees are gregarious, and the working bee will work herself to death in two months; and that, not for her own selfish interests, but for the interests of the hive. Many little birds are gregarious, and, by their cooperation, have proved themselves to be far more fitted to survive than the birds of prey. And man is a gregarious animal.

The scientists mentioned ignored this gregarious instinct. They regarded the law of the survival of the fittest as a relentless struggle for existence *between individuals*, and

Huxley, in his celebrated Romanes lecture, candidly confessed that he found in human nature moral and spiritual qualities which his conception of the law of the survival of the fittest utterly failed to explain. But altruism and loving self-sacrifice are easily explained when we realize that man is a social animal. The qualities evolved in man's ancestors were not those qualities calculated to enable him to achieve success in selfish rivalry with his fellows. They were those qualities calculated to enable the race to succeed in its co-operative struggle against the difficulties and dangers which beset it. These were, of course, those moral and spiritual qualities which so much puzzled Huxley. They are most fitted to survive who best serve the interests of the race. Thus "love is the fulfilling of the law," even the law of the survival of the fittest. Of a truth those who speak of war as a biological necessity show a profound ignorance of biology.

But now let us come to closer grips with our subject and consider in what relationship does war stand to this great law of the survival of the fittest.

Civilized warfare deliberately chooses the very best for death and destruction, leaving the worst to repeople the earth with their offspring. In every great war the best and bravest are conscripted for the army whilst the unsound in mind and body are sent home.

Now what would happen on a stock-farm if the very best beasts were killed off for food and the poorest were kept for breeding purposes? We all know that the farmer who acted thus would soon reap the harvest of his folly. And this is a true picture of what actually happens in times of war.

It happened in Assyria three thousand years ago; and when the best and bravest Assyrians were killed off, the Assyrians were bred from the weak and cowardly, and then Assyria fell to be replaced by Babylon. Then the same thing happened there and Babylon gave place to Persia, and Persia to Greece, and Greece to Rome. In later times the same thing happened in Spain and France. It has been calculated that four million men were killed during the Napoleonic wars, and they the *elite* of Europe. More than half of them were Frenchmen and France was repeopled by men of shorter stature, poorer physique, less courage, less intelligence and less virility. France was impoverished, not only of those who were slain, but of their children and their children's children, who should have been born but were not. No military nation has ever long survived. How could it? War is race suicide because it reverses the law of the survival of the fittest and breeds from the least fit.

Another example is the lovely valley of Aosta, in Northern Italy. One can not help but notice the enormous number of cretinous imbeciles who inhabit that valley; men and women, human in form, yet lacking all the dignity of manhood and even the intelligence of the lower animals. For centuries the intelligent peasantry of the valley of Aosta have been conscripted to join the Austrian Army. Only those who suffered from goitre have been allowed to follow the plow and they repeopled the valley with their children. The law of the survival of the fittest was reversed and the valley was repeopled by the least fit. And thus does war, like an awful ogre, rob the human race of all that is divine, degrading God's noblest work far beneath the level of his brute creation.

THE RECORD OF HISTORY

And now let us briefly consider what history has to say concerning the way of Jesus. One example is the conquest of Ireland by St. Patrick, which took place in the fifth century after Christ. Towards the close of the fourth century the boy Patrick was living on the West Coast of Britain when some Irish pirates carried him away. He was then sixteen years of age and he remained a slave in County Antrim for six years. He then escaped and after many adventures found his way home.

After this he studied in the universities of the continent and became Bishop of Tours, where his cave is still shown to visitors. But he could not get the Irish out of his mind, and one night he had a vision of an Irishman holding a parchment in his hand which was entitled "An Appeal to the Irish." But Patrick could read no more for his eyes filled with tears. So he determined that he must return. After many difficulties he succeeded in landing in Ireland and he avenged his cruel wrongs by spending the rest of his long life preaching the love of God in Christ to the Irish.

And thus did he conquer Ireland. So complete was the conquest that even today the Irish own his sway. Moreover we, too, owe a deep debt of gratitude to Patrick. A century later, when England was overrun by pagans, Columba and his monks landed on Iona and spread all that was best and noblest in religion and art and literature over the north of England. The gentle Aidan set up his bishoprick at Lindisfarne. The manly Cuthbert preached Christianity along the valleys of the Tyne. The Venerable Bede wrote his history at Jarrow. Caedmon, the herdsman, of Whitby Abbey, sang the first songs in the

English language. All this and more do we owe to Patrick.

When Europe had been devastated by heathen hordes and Christianity was almost extinct, learning and art and literature were kept alive in Ireland and scholars from all over the world flocked to her universities.

Missionaries from Ireland recivilized northern Europe and the name of many an Irish Saint is preserved in the towns of northern France and Germany. It was indeed a conquest! And truly love is the only thing that really does conquer, for it conquers not only men's bodies, but their souls.

Compare with this the British attempts to subdue Ireland. For seven centuries England has been trying to conquer Ireland, and at last we have been obliged to confess our utter failure!

But let us take examples nearer to our own time.

PENN'S "HOLY EXPERIMENT"

In the year 1681, William Penn and a handful of Quakers founded the Colony of Pennsylvania. All around them the white man was at war with the Indian, whose tomahawk and scalping knife carried terror and death and destruction into all the surrounding colonies. Surely Penn's "holy experiment" could not have been tried in circumstances more prejudicial to its success.

Notwithstanding this, however, Penn and his companions landed unarmed, and, from the very first, treated the Indians with Christian kindness and loving forbearance. The land, though it had already been given them by the

English monarch, they obtained again by treaty from the Indians themselves, whom they considered to be the real owners of the soil; a treaty which was described by Voltaire as the only treaty that was ever made without an oath and the only treaty that was ever kept.

For seventy long years the Colony remained under Quaker rule, depending for its safety upon the absence of all the usual means of protection. And what was the consequence of this "hare-brained folly"?—for that was what it was called by the worldly-wise contemporaries of William Penn.

The consequence was that during the whole of those seventy years, whilst blood flowed like water in the surrounding states, not one single drop of Christian blood was shed by the Indians in the colony of Pennsylvania.

I have heard the importance of this historical fact discounted on the score that it was entirely exceptional. And truly exceptional it was! But where did the exception lie? Surely the exception lay here, that this is the only instance recorded in history of the principles of Christ having been tried on a large political scale. Surely no one will argue that the exception lay here, that God protected those who put their trust in Him! Nay, one can bring forward evidence on a much smaller scale to prove that the exception did not lie there. For example, in the other states of North America, besides the state of Pennsylvania, the Quakers formed a not inconsiderable proportion of the population, and they, like their brethren of Pennsylvania, consistently refused to carry arms or to retire to fortified places at moments of extreme peril. They went about their ordinary avocations unarmed, and therefore unharmed. During those years of bloody war-

fare with the Indians, only three Friends lost their lives, two men and one woman, and they had lost their faith in peace principles and sought the protection of arms.

The awful rebellion which took place in Ireland towards the close of the eighteenth century, told exactly the same tale. There again, the Quakers consistently refused to carry arms. Not only so, but they incurred the displeasure of both parties in the struggle by never refusing succor to any one who came to them for protection; whether loyalist or insurgent, none were turned away. And what was the consequence? Terrible were the sufferings of Irish Friends during that awful time of bloody rebellion, but only one Friend lost his life, and he was a young man who had assumed regimentals and arms.

Then again one might mention the case of Luxemburg, which was absolutely defenseless, and compare it with Belgium, which was so fully armed and so bravely defended. This certainly seems to show that an undefended state may be safer than one that is well protected. But the defenseless condition of Luxemburg was, in a sense, accidental, and therefore the illustration may seem to some unconvincing.

Far more striking is the case of the frontier between Canada and the United States. Over a hundred years ago the British Government gave orders for the increase of their naval force on the Great Lakes, and there was every prospect of a competition in armaments between the two Governments. But the American Government suggested that instead of pursuing this dangerous policy, the frontier should be left undefended and, after some hesitation, the British Government agreed. The arrangement was ratified in the

Rush-Bagot Agreement of 1817, and the consequence has been a century of unbroken peace.

Whilst the tragedy of the recent war may well suffice to expose the folly of the oft-repeated statement "if you want peace, prepare for war," this almost forgotten story of our Canadian frontier may equally well serve to illustrate the obvious fact that if we want peace, we must seek peace and ensue it.

In civil life we generally recognize the fact that we are safer unarmed. If everyone carried a pistol in his breeches pocket, no one would be safe. And what is true in our social intercourse is equally true in our international relationships.

Thus do science and history support the teaching of Jesus. There are not two kinds of truth, scientific truth and religious truth. All truth is one, and when the churches renounced the teachings of the Prince of Peace, they turned their backs upon the teachings of science and history.

THE POWER OF LOVE

Do not imagine that these cases are examples of miraculous protection. There is nothing supernatural in the fact that evil can be overcome by good. Love is the strongest moral and spiritual force in the universe. That love should succeed where hatred failed, was no more supernatural, than it was supernatural in Æsop's fable that the sun should succeed in causing the traveler to take off his coat, whilst the chilling blast of winter only caused him to wrap it the more closely round him.

There is in every man, however degraded, a spark of divinity, a best which cannot fail to respond to that which is best in others, for surely "We needs must love the highest when we see it."

> "Be noble! And the nobleness that lies
> In other men, sleeping but never dead,
> Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."

Some will candidly admit that war and Christianity cannot possibly be reconciled. Of course they cannot. But they add with strange inconsistency "the teaching of Jesus is absolutely impracticable at the present time." Their position has been well expressed in the couplet:—

> "But loving all men clearly is deferred
> Till all men love each other."

But such was not the position of the early Christians, who, as we have already seen, willingly sacrificed all that they had and life itself for the peace principles of their Master. And are we, who live in the twentieth century, going to make expediency the measure of our loyalty to Christ?

We read in the third chapter of the Book of Daniel, that when King Nebuchadnezzar threatened Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego with the raging fiery furnace if they refused to bow down and worship the golden image which he had set up, their answer was that they had faith to believe that their God, Jehovah, could and would deliver them: "but," they added, "if not, be it known unto

thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

That is to say, even if Jehovah proved less strong than the God of the Babylonians, or if He proved unwilling or unable to do that which they expected of Him, come weal or come woe, they would be loyal to Jehovah. Alas! that the Prince of Peace has so few followers whose loyalty is of this robust type. Alas! that there are so few who realize the fact that:—

"Because right is right, to follow right,
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

One is often amazed at the gross and glaring inconsistency of professing Christians on the subject of war. When one sees the Pope of Rome, standing, as he himself described it, "like Moses," to bless the Spanish troops as they proceeded to the work of blood and desolation in the Island of Cuba, or when one sees Bishops blessing ironclads and other engines of devastation, and the destruction of life, one may well exclaim, "What strange representatives of the Prince of Peace!" But it would be very unfair to speak as though the dignitaries of the Roman and Anglican communities were the only ones that displayed this inconsistency. Equally with them the members of the Nonconformist Churches have flung to the winds their loyalty to their Master.

What should we think of a soldier of King George who was perfectly loyal in times of peace, but changed his colors in time of war? Yet that is a true picture of many of the professing followers of Jesus Christ today. They cry "Peace,

peace," when there is peace, and nothing is easier and nothing more futile, but as soon as war breaks out they at once become worshippers of Mars and Moloch.

Oh! that the Church may return to her allegiance to her Lord ere it be too late, ere the irrevocable sentence be passed upon her, which was passed upon the chosen people of old, "When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you, yea when ye make many prayers I will not hear! Your hands are full of blood."

However, the Christian ideal of universal peace is not the mere absence of war. It is the full and practical recognition of the Universal Fatherhood of God and the Universal Brotherhood of Man. It is the full and practical application of the spirit of Christ's Sermon on the Mount to all our relationships in life, not excepting our foreign relationships.

An armed peace seems little, if at all, less immoral than a condition of actual warfare. The dogs of war are as little in harmony with the Spirit of Christ's life and teaching when they are chained as when they are let loose, and morally, there is but little to choose between the United States spending her millions in preparation for war, and the United States spilling her life-blood on the battlefield.

Look at the so-called "Christian" nations of Europe and America today. Where comes in the Universal Fatherhood of God? Where comes in the Universal Brotherhood of Man? Where comes in Christ's sermon on the Mount? If these things did come in, war would be seen to be as foolish as it is wicked. Rivalry amongst nations would be a rivalry of moral qualities, and patriotism would mean no longer a greed of territory or a lust of gold. Rather would it

mean a desire to see one's country standing in the forefront of all the countries in the world, for honor, truth and righteousness.

The jingo has no monopoly of patriotism. All who serve their country with these noble aims in view are patriotic, even though they recognize the fact that other nations, besides their own, have their rights; and as for their own

> "Best they honor thee,
> Who honor in thee only what is best."

And this Christian ideal of universal peace can be attained in one way, and in one way only, and that is by Christians being loyal to Christ. And if thus loyal to Him, though they may be called, in times of peace, visionaries and dreamers, and in times of war reproached as traitors and lovers of all countries save their own, it matters nothing, for God and time are on their side, and "one with God is a majority."

"Dreamer of dreams, we take the taunt in gladness,
Knowing that God, beyond the years you see,
Hath wrought those dreams, that count with you for madness,
Into the substance of the life to be."

E. Vipont Brown.

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